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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/549,979	02/06/2006	Bruce A. Dale	2003UR013	3442
34477 7590 04/30/2008 Exxon Mobil Upstream Research Company P.O. Box 2189 (CORP-URC-SW 359) Houston, TX 77252-2189				
EXAMINER THOMPSON, KENNETH L				
ART UNIT 3672		PAPER NUMBER		
MAIL DATE 04/30/2008		DELIVERY MODE PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/549,979

Applicant(s)

DALE ET AL.

Examiner

Kenneth Thompson

Art Unit

3672

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 March 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-46, 48, 51, 59-61, 63-79 and 82-94 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19, 36-46, 48, 51, 59-61, 63-67, 69-72, 76-79, 82-84 and 88-94 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 68 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 20-35, 73-75 and 85-87 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-846)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Receipt is acknowledged of a request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) and a submission, filed on 20 March 2008.

Claim Objections

Claim 20 is objected to because of the following informalities:

The recitation "the first flow path the second path" in lines 15 and 16 should be changed to "the first flow path or the second path". Claims 21-35, 73-75 and 85-87 depend from claim 20 and are likewise objected to.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 68 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sparlin et al., U.S. 5,476,143.

Sparlin et al. discloses in figures 1 and 2 first and second eccentric, elongated, annular flow joints between wall portions (6c) of the shunt tubes (6) having a perforation (2a) therebetween; wherein the inner diameter of joints of pipe (2) provide communication between the permeable sections (at 2a and 5) of the joints; including a

plurality of walls (3) in the flow joints to form a plurality of third flow pathways (col. 7, lines 35-41) having a permeable section (at 5), and a central opening (7) in the shunt tube section. Sparlin et al. discloses gravel packing an oil well (col. 8, lines 4-30).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-19, 36-46, 48, 51, 59-61, 63-67, 69-72, 76-79, 82-84 and 88-94 are allowed.

Claims 20-35, 73-75 and 85-87 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objection above.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Jones, U.S. 5,165,476 discloses a similar first base pipe (13) or casing having a permeable section (15) and an impermeable section above the packer (30) or wall; a second base pipe having permeable (21) and impermeable (25) sections and the sections in fluid communication at the annulus (19).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kenneth Thompson whose telephone number is 571 272-7037. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:00 am - 2:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David J. Bagnell can be reached on 571-272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

28 April 2008

/Kenneth Thompson/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3672